

FRIENDS OF MAUNGAWHAU

Caring for the volcanic heritage of Auckland

Annual Report 2017-2018

15 June 2018

The Friends of Maungawhau (FoM) is an incorporated society that has been active on Maungawhau / Mt Eden for the last 20 years. We are a community group of about 200 casual members and about 15 active volunteers. We meet every Tuesday morning to remove invasive exotic plants, bring back the natural native flora and maintain tracks in the west and south of the Maunga.

We have also been advocates for improved management of all the maunga and wider issues impacting public parks and open space.

1. The committee continues to operate thanks to the secretary April Glenday, volunteer organiser Jean Barton, and treasurer Keith Ayton. Ian Fish still oversees the website. Kit Howden continues as chairperson.
2. Jean and Keith and a few volunteers have attended almost every Tūpuna Maunga Authority hui since inception. We have a good working relationship with the officers and contractors. Recent changes in staff have resulted in further developing relationships and in some cases going over old ground and issues.
3. Tuesday activities continued throughout the year. The number of participants varied between 3 and 12, with the usual number being around six or seven. Jean's weekly reports now number over 446 to 12 June 2018 – recording almost nine years of conservation work.
4. Some main events over the last year include:
 - Finally the track from Batger Rd to Hillside Cres was completed and informally opened and some repairs made.
 - Scott de Silva, the manager for the Tūpuna Maunga Authority, resigned and was appointed to manage the northern regional parks. The new manager, Nick Turoa from DoC, was appointed at the end of 2017. Ranger/ field officer Dave Bhana was appointed this year.
 - A series of good meetings have been had with the staff and the new contractors, Recreation Services. Good communication has been established and quarterly meetings planned to keep FoM members and committee informed of directions.
 - FoM made a lengthy submission to the Auckland Council and Tūpuna Maunga Authority on the statutory annual plan and 10-year long-term plan, and the Board plan to 2050. Four committee members also made presentations to TMA members. We were well received, although we expressed our frustration with slow progress dealing with such issues as erosion and lack of rangers to deal with increased number of tourists.

Again it shows the lack of funds and staff to deal with the pressure on public conservation parks in Auckland.

- As part of the Auckland Heritage Festival in October, a successful walk was run from Parnell through Newmarket to the summit (tihi) of Maungawhau.
- Our website was upgraded and our 2014 book *Maungawhau: a short history of volunteer action* is now available to download free of charge.
- A severe storm on 10 April caused considerable damage, with trees blown over and branches broken. It took a few Tuesdays to clear. This showed the forces of nature and the instability of species like Whau that can be easily blown over due to their fast growing ability.
- Volunteers are doing more work in the Maungawhau nursery and are growing on plants now that final approval has been given to the end of 2019 for planting in the Quarry area and southern face.
- FoM volunteers have helped out at Big King, Auckland Grammar School quarry restoration, Fowlds Park and other locations.

Kit Howden
Chair